

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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P 081705Z MAR 78

FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 139

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY

AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: POLL PUTS QUEBEC LIBERALS AHEAD OF PARTI QUEBECOIS

1. SUMMARY: POLL PUBLISHED IN TABLOID DIMANCHE MATIN (SUNDAYS ONLY) SHOWED PARTI LIBERAL DU QUEBEC (PLQ) AHEAD (SLIGHTLY) OF PARTI QUEBECOIS (PQ) FOR FIRST TIME SINCE PQ WIN OF NOVEMBER 15, 1976. POLL ALSO INDICATED CLOSE TO TWICE AS MUCH SUPPORT, IN PERSONAL POLITICAL POPULARITY RACE, FOR PM TRUDEAU AS FOR QUEBEC PREMIER LEVESQUE. POLL WAS CONDUCTED BY L'INSTITUT QUEBECOIS D'OPINION PUBLIQUE (IQOP), WHICH HAS SPOTTY RECORD FOR ACCURACY. END SUMMARY.

2. POLL TABLES SHOW:

A. QUESTION: CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC HEADED BY MR. RENE LEVESQUE, HOW WOULD YOU SAY YOU FELT ABOUT IT?

REST

OF THE

TOTAL FRENCH ENGLISH MONTREAL QUEBEC PROVINCE

(N-714) (N-593) (N-121) (N-387) (N-129) (N-198)

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SATISFIED	44.9	50.0	20.6	42.3	51.1	46.0
UNSATISFIED	46.4	41.6	53.7	48.3	44.2	44.0
NO OPINION	8.7	8.4	24.7	9.4	4.7	10.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

NOTE: N-NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS.

B. QUESTION: AS A POLITICAL PERSONALITY, WHOM DO YOU ESTEEM MORE HIGHLY, PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU OR RENE LEVESQUE?

	TOTAL (N-714)	FRANCOPHONES (N-593)	ANGLOPHONES (N-121)
TRUDEAU	46.9	44.9	57.0
LEVESQUE	26.9	30.0	11.5
BOTH	15.1	14.7	17.3
NEITHER	6.3	5.9	8.2
NO OPINION	4.8	4.5	6.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

C. QUESTION: (REGARDING THE AUTO INSURANCE LAW) AT THE PRESENT TIME, ARE YOU IN FAVOR OF OR AGAINST THIS LAW?

	TOTAL (N-689)	REGION OF MONTREAL	REGION OF QUEBEC	REST OF THE PROVINCE
IN FAVOR OF	31.3	29.7	36.2	31.4
AGAINST	47.1	43.5	46.4	54.6
NO OPINION	21.6	26.8	17.4	14.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

D. QUESTION: DO YOU APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF THE DECISION MADE BY THE SUN LIFE ASSURANCE CO. TO EVENTUALLY MOVE ITS HEAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OFFICE FROM MONTREAL TO TORNOTO?

	TOTAL (N-714)	FRENCH (N-593)	ENGLISH/OTHERS (N-121)
APPROVE	16 0/0	12.3 0/0	34.0 0/0
DISAPPROVE	59 0/0	61.0 0/0	49.0 0/0
NO OPINION	25 0/0	26.7 0/0	17.0 0/0
TOTAL	100 0/0	100 0/0	100 0/0

E. QUESTION: ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL REASONS INVOKED BY SUN LIFE TO USTIFY ITS DEPARTURE FOR TORNTO CONCERNS THE DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF BILL 101 ON LANGUAGE. DO YOU CONSIDER THIS A VALID REASON OR NOT IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN THE DEPARTURE OF SUN LIFE'S HEAD OFFICE?

	TOTAL (N-714)	FRENCH (N-593)	ENGLISH (N-121)
VALID	25.2	20.2	49.6
NOT VALID	59.9	65.9	30.5
NO OPINION	14.9	13.9	19.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

F. QUESTION: (1) WHICH PARTY WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD TOMORROW IN QUEBEC (I.E. FEBRUARY 1978)? A SECOND QUESTION WAS PUT TO THOSE WHO DID NOT IDENTIFY A PARTY: (2) IN THAT CASE, WHICH PARTY WOULD YOU BE LIKELY TO SUPPORT PRESENTLY?

PROPORTIONATE
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION
(N-714)

PARTI QUEBECOIS	26.8 0/0	38.5 0/0
LIBERAL	27.9 0/0	40.0 0/0
UNION NATIONALE	10.2 0/0	14.6 0/0
CREDITIST	3.1 0/0	4.5 0/0
POPULAR NATIONALIST	0.7 0/0	1.0 0/0
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OTHERS	30.3 0/0
TOTAL	100.0 0/0 100.0 0/0

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G. THE FOLLOWING TABLE INDICATES THE PROGRESSION OF VOTING INTENTION DISTRIBUTED PROPORTIONALLY FOR EACH PARTY SINCE APRIL 1977.

TOTAL 18-24(AGE)
(N-714)(N-113) 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65 PLUS
(N-209) (N-157) (N-98) (N-74) (N-63)

PQ 26.8 38.1 41.1 19.7 12.2 13.5 14.3
LIBERAL 27.9 25.7 22.5 28.0 32.7 31.1 38.1
UN 10.2 10.6 9.1 14.6 5.1 10.8 9.5

(SAME TABLE CONTINUED)

FRENCH ENGLISH MONTREAL QUEBEC PROVINCE
(N-593) (N-121) (N-387) (N-129) (N-198)

PQ 30.7 7.4 24.3 30.2 29.3
LIBERAL 24.6 43.8 29.2 24.8 27.3
UN 10.6 8.2 9.3 10.9 11.6

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3. BY HAPPENSTANCE, WE WERE MEETING ON MONDAY WITH MAURICE PINARD, POLLSTER WHO "CALLED" PQ VICTORY AT EXACT NUMBER OF SEATS. HE SAID HIS FIRST REACTION TO THIS POLL HAD BEEN ONE OF SUSPICION, SINCE IQOP POLLS IN PAST HAVE SEEMED DISTORTED IN FAVOR OF LIBERALS. ON OTHER HAND, EARLIER "LEAKS" OF PQ POLLS HAD TENDED UNDERRATE LIBERALS AND LAST SUCH LEAK SHOWED LIBERALS NECK-AND-NECK WITH PQ. HE FEELS, THEREFORE, THAT IRRESPECTIVE OF PRECISION OF EITHER SET OF FIGURES, UPWARD TREND OF LIBERALS IS REAL. HE ALSO FEELS IQOP MAY BE USING MORE CARE IN PRESENT SERIES OF POLLS IN EFFORT RE-ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY.

4. COMMENT: POLL SEEMS VERY REASONABLE FROM MONTREAL PERSPECTIVE AND DOES, UNDOUBTEDLY, REFLECT RETURN OF DISENCHANTED ANGLOPHONES AS PREMIER LEVESQUE SAID IN YESTERDAY'S NEWS CONFERENCE. IT ALSO REFLECTS, HOWEVER, RETURN OF FRANCO-PHONES WHO EQUALLY ANNOYED WITH LIBERALS IN 1976, WHICH NOT MENTIONED BY LEVESQUE. ACCORDING PAUL DESROCHERS, RURAL AREAS HAD KEPT LIBERAL PARTY SYMPATHIES EVEN WHEN "PUNISHING" THE PARTY IN 1976 ELECTIONS. MANY OF THOSE HERE, HOWEVER, IN CONTRAST TO THEIR RURAL BRETHREN, WERE REALLY PREPARED TO SUPPORT A NEW APPEAL TO THEIR FEDERALIST-BUT-NATIONALIST INSTINCTS BY THE UNION NATIONALE. THEY TOO ARE NOW RETURNING TO THE LIBERAL FOLD. LEVESQUE IS THUS OVERSTATING THE "ETHNIC" BIAS.

5. NATIONALLY, MOST IMPORTANT POLL FIGURES GIVEN TO DATE ARE THOSE RE POPULARITY OF TRUDEAU-LEVESQUE. ALMOST EVERYONE HERE FEELS FEDERAL ELECTION WILL BE NOT LATER THAN JUNE 26. MANY FEEL THAT, DESPITE OFFICIAL PQ "HANDS OFF" POLICY, SOME PQ MILITANTS WILL ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE IN FEDERAL ELECTION

EITHER AS INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES OR AS BEHIND-THE-SCENES
SUPPORTERS OF TORIES. WE AGREE THEY MAY WANT TO BUT THAT
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DOESN'T MEAN THEY WILL, AS PC'S WOULD PROBABLY NOT WELCOME
OVERT SUPPORT, WHICH CLARK HAS MADE CLEAR, AND THERE IS NO
WAY SUCH SUPPORT COULD BE KEPT SECRET. MOREOVER, UNHAPPY
EXPERIENCE WHEN PQ ATTEMPTED INFLUENCE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS
(MONTREAL'S 1977 958) MAY GIVE MILITANTS PAUSE.

6. DIMANCHE MATIN POLL COVERS SEVERAL OTHER AS YET
UNDEFINED AREAS WHICH WILL BE REVEALED IN UPCOMING ISSUES.
TOPICS REASONABLE TO EXPECT WOULD INCLUDE REFERENDUM, ECONOMY,
SOCIAL AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, GIVEN PQ TALENT FOR ANTAGONIZING
VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY (WOMEN, LABOR, BUSINESS, ETC.),
THERE ARE LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.
HARPER

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